

11. (Twice Amended) A document processing method comprising the steps of:

retaining a plurality of folders each storing a plurality of sets of document information;

selecting a folder from among the plurality of folders based on a number of sets of document information containing a keyword inputted as a search condition; and

providing [a] advance notification of the folder selected in said selecting step.

12. (Twice Amended) A computer readable storage medium storing programs executing the steps of:

retaining a plurality of folders each storing at least one document;

selecting a candidate folder suitable for retaining a new document by comparing a feature of the new document with an average of features of the documents stored in a folder among the plurality of folders; and

providing [a] advance notification of the candidate folder selected in said selecting step.

13. (Twice Amended) A computer readable storage medium storing programs executing the steps of:

their invention, in terms which distinguish over the art of record. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1, 4, 5 and 9-14 are the independent claims.

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 3, 5, 8-34 and 39-61 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,832,470 (Morita). As well, Claims 4 and 35-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,745,893 (Hill et al.).

Independent Claim 1, as amended, is directed to a document processing system comprising a document retaining means for retaining a plurality of folders each storing at least one document, a candidate folder selecting means for selecting a candidate folder suitable for retaining a new document by comparing a feature of the new document with an average of features of the documents stored in a folder among the plurality of folders, and notifying means for providing advance notification of the candidate folder selected by the candidate folder selecting means.

A useful feature of the system of amended independent Claim 1 is the fact that the notifying means supplies the operator with **advance** notice of the candidate folder selected by the candidate folder selecting means. This allows the operator to be able to choose folders in one group of folders included in the notification, or to reject

the system's choice, and select the group of folders excluded by the system as reported in the notification. Thus, given this feature, an operator can determine which folder to store a document in as a result of the notification. The advance notification feature is thus provided as a supporting function, putting the user on notice **so that further action can be taken by the user.** This is in opposition to prior art systems which, at best, automatically decide what folders originals are stored in, and simply notify the operator of the *fait accompli*. This feature of the system of amended Claim 1 puts the operator into the decision-making loop, resulting in an open ended intelligent system, as opposed to a closed system limited by the feature comparison rules built into it.

The Office Action, at Section 3 thereof, cites to numerous sections of *Morita* as anticipating the notifying means or notification method, in connection with each of the pending independent claims, such as, for example, col. 12, lines 27-44, col. 14, lines 50-67, col. 29, lines 57-67, col. 30 lines 1-3, col. 26, lines 10-38, and col. 27, lines 2-24. Applicant is somewhat puzzled at these citations as none of them, as read by Applicants, even teach a notification means or method. Furthermore, assuming *arguendo* that they somehow

do teach some type of notification method, there is absolutely no mention anywhere in *Morita* of an **advance** notification means as recited in amended Claim 1.

The corresponding independent system Claim 5, method Claims 9-11, and computer program Claims 12-14, all as amended, each contain the advance notification means or advance notification step, as the case may be, in an analogous fashion to independent Claim 1, as amended. Thus these claims are deemed patentable over *Morita*, as well, for similar reasons.

Independent Claim 4 recites a document-processing system comprising judging means for judging a similarity degree between document information and a plurality of sets of information of documents stored in a folder, a similarity order calculating means for calculating a similarity order of a plurality of folders in accordance with the similarity judged by said judging means, and notifying means for providing advance notification of the similarity order of the plurality of folders calculated by the similarity order calculating means.

Hill is directed to a process and system for determining relevance. *Hill* neither teaches nor suggests the advance notification feature of amended Claim 4, by means of which an operator can determine which folder to store a

document in as a result of the notification. In *Hill* originals to be stored are simply stored in folders designated by the system, and the operator cannot chose the folders in which to store originals. Thus, Applicants urge, Claim 4 is patentably distinct from *Hill*.

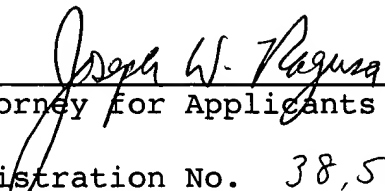
The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the ~~individual consideration or reconsideration, as the case may~~ be, of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All

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Respectfully submitted,



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